

Executive Summary

THE CALIFORNIA FIRE PLAN

The State Board of Forestry and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) have drafted a comprehensive update of the fire plan for wildland fire protection in California. The planning process defines a level of service measurement, considers assets at risk, incorporates the cooperative interdependent relationships of wildland fire protection providers, provides for public stakeholder involvement, and creates a fiscal framework for policy analysis. Ventura County Fire Protection District is one of the Contract Counties that maintain a contractual relationship with CDF and utilizes the California Fire Plan within Ventura County.

Goals and Objectives

The overall goal is to reduce total cost and losses from wildland fire in California by protecting assets at risk through focused pre-fire management prescriptions and increased initial attack success.

The California Fire Plan has five strategic objectives:

- To create wildfire protection zones that reduces the risks to citizens and firefighters.
- To assess all wild lands. Analyses will include all wildland fire service providers – federal, state, local government and private. The analysis will identify high risk, high value areas, and develop information on and determine who is responsible, who is responding, and who is paying for wildland fire emergencies.
- To analyze and identify key policy issues and develop recommendations for changes of public policy. Analysis will include alternatives to reduce total cost and losses by increasing the fire protection system effectiveness.
- To have a strong fiscal policy focus and monitor the wildland fire protection system in fiscal terms. This will include all public and private expenditures and economic losses.
- To translate these analyses into public policy.

Fire Plan Framework

Five major components will form the basis of an ongoing fire planning process to monitor and assess California's wildland fire environment.



Wildfire Protection Zones

A key product of this Fire Plan is the development of wildfire safety zones to reduce citizen and firefighter risk from future large wildfires.

Initial Attack Success

The fire plan defines an assessment protection system for wildland fire. This measure can be used to assess the department's ability to provide an equal level of protection to lands of similar type, as required by Public Resources Code 4130. This measurement is the percentage of fires that are successfully controlled before unacceptable cost is incurred.

Knowledge of the level of service will help define the risk to wildfire damage faced by public and private assets in the wildland.

Assets Protected

The plan will establish a methodology for defining assets protected and their degree of risk from wildfire. The assets addressed in the plan are citizen and firefighter safety, watersheds and water, timber, wildlife and habitat (including rare and endangered species), unique areas (scenic, cultural, and historic), recreation, range, structures, and air quality. Stakeholders-national, state, local, and private agencies, interest groups, etc., will be identified for each asset at risk. The assessment will define the areas where assets are at risk from wildfire, enabling fire service managers and stakeholders to set priorities for pre-fire management project work.

Pre-fire Management

This aspect focuses on system analysis methods that assess alternatives to protect assets from unacceptable risk of wildland fire damage. Projects include a combination of fuels reduction, ignition management, fire-safe engineering activities, and forest health to protect public and private assets. The priority for projects will be based on asset owners and other stakeholders' input and support. Pre-fire management prescriptions designed to protect these assets will also identify who benefits and who should share in the project cost.

Fiscal Framework

The Board and CDF are developing a fiscal framework for assessing and monitoring annual and long-term changes in California's wildland fire protection systems. State, local and federal wildland fire protection agencies, along with the private sector, have evolved into an interdependent system of pre-fire management and suppression forces. As a result, changes to budgeted levels of service of any the entities directly affect the others and the services delivered to the public. Monitoring system changes through this fiscal framework will allow the



Board and CDF to address public policy issues that maximize the efficiency of local, state, and federal firefighting resources.

The Fire Plan framework applications:

The Fire Plan framework identifies for state, federal, and local officials and for the public those areas of concentrated assets and high risk.

- Allow Ventura County Fire Protection District to create a more efficient fire protection system focused on meaningful solutions for identified problem areas.
- Give citizens an opportunity to identify public and private assets to design and carry out projects to protect those assets.
- Identify, before fires start, where cost-effective pre-fire management investments can be made to reduce taxpayer cost and citizen losses from wildfire.
- Encourage an integrated intergovernmental approach to reducing cost and losses.
- Enable policy makers and the public to focus on what can be done to reduce future cost and losses from wildfire.